

# The Observer

THINGS INTERESTING TO THE DEAF

VOL. IV

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1913

NO. 104

## Superintendents Approve the N. A. D. Work

A superintendent, who on many occasions has shown himself a genuine friend of the deaf, writes as follows:

"Dear Mr. Hanson:

"I note the good work your Association is doing, and it is along the line that is going to count. I do not know just what your resources are, but I know that your expenses must be quite a good deal, and you should not be hampered for lack of needful money.

"I believe that if you were to address a letter to certain of the superintendents of schools for the deaf and lay the matter before them in a concise form, they will be glad to contribute to the Publicity Fund of your Association.

"To start the ball rolling I am sending you a check for \$10, and in addition to this, will be the twentieth superintendent to contribute another \$10. That is to say, if you can get nineteen superintendents to give \$10 or more each, I will send you another \$10 for the Fund."

In response to the above a letter has been sent out, and several checks have already been received.

It is the policy of the present administration to reach the hearing public. Several circulars have been issued and distributed to hearing people interested. Circular No. 9, a twelve-page pamphlet entitled "Methods of Educating the Deaf, and Opinions About the Sign Language," was sent to parents of Nebraska deaf, to legislators, to many country papers, and school superintendents in Nebraska; to the Institution press; to school superintendents in cities having day schools, and to a number of other people. An edition of 1,000 is nearly exhausted. Several requests for copies have been received. Another edition will be printed and distributed as funds permit.

### PROGRAM COMMITTEE.

Rev. J. H. Cloud, of St. Louis; A. J. Eickhoff, of Michigan, and Olof Hanson, ex-officio chairman, have been appointed a committee on program for the Cleveland convention.

### A QUERY.

A reader asks what becomes of the fresh water fish that are carried out into salt water by numerous streams.

We submitted this question to that perpetual sportsman, Roy Harris, but he admitted it was new to him.

Who can answer?

## AN ORALIST SPEAKS

Having received most of my training in oral schools, I believe that, although the method is far from perfect, it is the only one that gets practical results in speech and lip reading.

Combined system adherents repeatedly declare that their system is superior in training the deaf child's mind, and cite the proportionately larger number of pupils from combined system schools at Gallaudet. Mr. Hanson says 80 per cent of the deaf schools in the United States use the combined system. I know that in the oral boarding schools, at least two of the best, that I attended, the pupils were not encouraged to go to Gallaudet, for obvious reasons. Is it then so strange that Gallaudet is so over run with combined system pupils, or that no orally taught pupil has yet been lucky enough to carry off the honor of delivering the valediction?

I am ready to believe anything that has been reasonably well proven. I recognize that the sign language is a great boon to the deaf at large, but I fail to see any use in teaching a deaf child to talk, in a combined system school, where a few words in class room a few hours a day go for naught. When class is over, this same child proceeds, with all the time at his disposal, to forget what he has been taught. You may not believe me, but I assure you that during eight months spent as a combined system school pupil, hardly once, if I remember correctly, did I see a pupil speak to another, outside of the class room. Why, in one oral class, it was plainly evident the pupils were positively ashamed to open their mouths to each other for the necessary class room work.

This must exist in some degree in all combined system schools. I cannot but come to the conclusion that a pure oral school is preferable for those who have a (natural or trained) aptitude for speech, and a pure sign school (or combined system, if you will insist on calling it that), for those who cannot learn speech to advantage.

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

It sure looks like I'm a fool indeed, May the God-Editors gently deal,

But my epitaph, this is, I feel.

Most respectfully,

LAWRENCE BELSER.

## Nebraska Oral Law

If the editors were to place at my disposal all the space in this issue of The Observer for a discussion of the fight being waged on the Nebraska oral law, I would still lack space enough to tell everything that might be said. I shall confine myself to a brief statement, however. The fight is on with as much earnestness as was ever put into it, despite the fact that two of our bills have been indefinitely postponed. The National Association of the Deaf has been waging war for a principle, not persons, but the supporters of the oral law have done their very best to make every one believe that our fight is a personal one. In a way they have succeeded in making the biased and uninformed take that view, but those who understand the true state of affairs are not misled.

Prof. F. W. Booth has been reappointed as head of the school at Omaha, and every one who knows him personally has expressed satisfaction. Mr. Booth has declared in writing that he will enforce the oral law as it now stands, supposing, of course, that the piles of money controlled by the oralists and their ability to purchase influence against the efforts of the National Association of the Deaf win this spring at Lincoln. However, it is difficult to reconcile this statement of Mr. Booth's with another attributed to him, that he thinks now the pure oral method cannot do as much good for numbers of the deaf as can the combined system. The best way to bring an obnoxious law into disrepute is to enforce it to the letter, and, in case the legislators at Lincoln hearken to the oralists and permit that law to remain, it is our hope Supt. Booth will do so.

The broad-minded deaf of the country have come to our aid with money and words of encouragement. President Hanson and myself, with Mr. L. M. Hunt on the ground at Lincoln, have done our best to win, and if we fail it will be through no fault of ours. We have until April to know definitely what is finally done. Many good hearing men have espoused our cause. The biggest scare they ever experienced was thrown into the camp of the oralists when they learned that a fight was to be made on the law they so quietly passed two years ago, depriving the deaf child of Nebraska of the privilege of securing an education by the combined system, than which there is none better. They hastened to Lincoln with a dozen parents

of deaf children to insist that the oral law be not repealed; they began a campaign of vituperation and misrepresentation in the newspapers of Nebraska, and, we are informed, they even went so far as to "see" the editors of two or three and demand that communications from those fighting the law be not published.

The obstacles against which we have to contend have been great. Opposition from the oralists was to be expected, but what shall we say of certain of the leading deaf of the country who, while professedly favoring the combined system, have belittled the efforts of those fighting for the most cherished principle of the deaf? The very ones who, by reason of their prominence, should be the hardest workers for our cause have been ridiculing our efforts, thereby aiding and abetting the enemy. To give the names of some of these would create a sensation—so I refrain!

Win or lose, the deaf of the country will have the satisfaction of knowing that the National Association has started a determined fight against the pure oral propaganda, and will keep it up. The entering wedge has been driven, and with the oralists in Nebraska thoroughly scared and a fine victory won in Wisconsin, future operations by the Association will be conducted with a greater confidence in the ultimate result.

P. L. AXLING.

#### NEBRASKA

Mr. Hunt has returned to his home in Missouri. He tried hard to get a vote on the bill to amend the present oral law, but the committee having it in charge seemed disposed to hold it back indefinitely, and Mr. Hunt, feeling that it would be useless waste of money to remain inactive, concluded to leave the matter in the hands of two hearing friends in Lincoln, Mr. Bangs and Mr. Allenbach.

The oralists, under the leadership of Mr. Booth, had as many as ten men at a time before the committee, and, while Mr. Hunt was assisted by Mr. Allenbach, the odds were against him.

With the proneness to misrepresentation the oralists made it appear that a personal attack on Mr. Booth was being made, whereas the efforts of the N. A. D. have been directed against the law, not against the superintendent.

Senator McFarland's statement that he had talked with the pupils and the graduates, and found them almost universally in favor of the exclusive oral method, no doubt carried considerable weight, and it is a statement that can be refuted only by the deaf of Nebraska. For some reason they have held aloof from helping the N.

A. D. If they really desire the exclusive oral method as McFarland says, they should come out and say so openly. But we know that they do not want it, if private assurances mean anything.

The state associations have done nothing, and the reason is easily explained. There are two associations, a state association and an alumni association. The president of one is a teacher and that of the other is printing instructor in the school at Omaha, and they well know that they would lose their jobs if they were to oppose the present law.

At the outset repeated efforts were made to have a resident of Nebraska represent the N. A. D. at Lincoln, but no one available could be found. Mr. Hunt offered his services several months ago if needed, and while fully realizing that he would be at a disadvantage on account of being a non-resident, he was appointed. He has done as good work as any one could have done under the circumstances. A number of hearing people have been won over to our cause, and while the result may not show at once, it will later on.

Since Mr. Hunt left, the committee of which Mr. McFarland is a member, has reported the bill for indefinite postponement. There the matter stands according to latest advices. The fight will continue as long as there is any chance to win, and if we do not win this time, we can try again.

A prominent Nebraskan said that the best way to kill the law is to enforce it, and this may prove to be true.

The money for the fight does not come out of the N. A. D. treasury, but has been contributed specially for this purpose by both hearing and deaf friends of the cause.

#### MISSTATEMENTS CORRECTED.

Editor State Journal, Lincoln, Neb.: In the State Journal of February 21 there appeared a brief report of the committee hearing on the bill to repeal the law that requires the exclusive use of the oral method in teaching the deaf of Nebraska. One statement therein calls for correction, and I trust you will allow me space to make it, as well as to call attention to one or two other matters relating to the subject.

I refer particularly to the statement that "the repeal of the law is backed by an organization of deaf mute teachers who can never teach the oral system because they cannot themselves talk." This is miselading, to say the least. The repeal of the Nebraska oral law is sought by the rank and file of the educated deaf of the entire United States. They are members of

the National Association of the Deaf, and a very small proportion are in any way connected with school for the deaf. The president of the National Association is Mr. Olof Hanson, of Seattle, and as such he has felt it his duty to carry on the fight in behalf of the deaf of the country. He has no other interest than to see justice done the deaf child who does not realize what is best for him.

A repeal petition signed by some 1,450 deaf mutes of the country is in the hands of the representatives of the National Association at Lincoln. Among those signing the petition there are 165, or about 12 per cent, who were educated by the oral method. This is a surprisingly large proportion. If it were true that the oral method was superior to the combined system does the reader think for a moment that those who were educated by it would so generally sign any petition to make a change at the Omaha school?

The National Association of the Deaf has not singled out Nebraska for this fight. It is a fight of national import, and Nebraska came under our attention first for the reason the oralists two years ago quietly worked a game on the legislature and had the oral law passed. Our opponents, the oralists, have done their best to make out that this is a fight against the head of the Omaha school. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Prof. F. W. Booth is known and respected by most of the members of the National Association. They have the highest regard for his ability as an educator. It is the exclusive use of the oral method that they protest against. It is impossible to give every deaf child a good broad education through that method alone. The combined system will do it. The combined system includes all good methods, and uses the method best adapted to any particular case—it fits the method to the child, while the oral method attempts to fit the child to the method.

The educated deaf of the country feel that a vital principle is at stake, and they are fighting to uphold it. They know from their own experience what is best for the rising generation of deaf children. They realize that, should the exclusive use of the oral method prevail, the deaf of a decade hence will be inferior in mentality to the educated deaf of today. They have no selfish motives, but are simply demanding that the deaf child, who cannot speak for himself, be accorded the God-given right to which he is entitled.

P. L. AXLING.

Seattle, Wash., Feb. 28, 1913.

(The Journal did not print the letter, giving as an excuse "lack of space." The oralists had evidently "seen" the editor.)

# THE OBSERVER

AGATHA TIEGEL HANSON, EDITOR  
W. S. ROOT - - - Associate Editor

The Observer is issued every two weeks on Thursday. It is published in the interest of the deaf everywhere.

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## EDITORIAL.

The last number of the Washingtonian was in memoriam of Mrs. Clarke, and contained many tributes to her by her pupils, who knew her and loved her. Many and heartfelt as they are, they are yet too few to express the charm and beauty of Mrs. Clarke's life and character, and the loss the deaf sustained in the death of a friend who so truly loved them.

The Kansas School has, by a bill passed by the legislature, been taken from under the care of the Board of Control, and placed with the State University and Normal Schools, managed by the State Board of Education. The fight which has resulted so happily for our Kansas friends was waged for several years. Congratulations are extended to the educated deaf of the state, who did the lion's share of the work which resulted in the passage of the bill.

## THE N. A. D. REPORT.

At last, about a year after the money was voted, the N. A. D. report has reached us. From a typographical standpoint it is a fair appearing product.

There is much to commend in the report. The part executed by A. L. Roberts, of Kansas, seems to be well done.

## SILENT REVIEW SILENT

The Silent Review will review no more. It has ceased publication.

This makes the second or third independent paper that has gone out of existence since the Observer started.

Show your appreciation of the efforts of The Observer by subscribing.

## WHY.

At the Colorado Springs N. A. D. convention a young man on the impulse of the moment cast two votes for his candidate for president. The vote was cast openly, without any attempt at concealment, and attention was immediately called to the matter and he was sharply criticized by the president before the whole convention.

This punishment it would seem was sufficient for what was intended only as a joke or enlivenment.

What was the astonishment and disgust of the members to find an exaggerated account of the affair written up and printed on page 80 of the N. A. D. report.

Why was the affair mentioned at all?

What good ends were served by its publication?

The young man is now in this state. He has led a creditable life. He holds a responsible position. He is making a name for himself as a writer of verse. He has married a sweet, pure, intelligent and lovable woman. Yet all this seems to go for naught. Some one, apparently with malice, has seen fit to blow a small mole hill up into a mountain and place it in the permanent records of the Association—an everlasting black mark to a promising young man.

A whole lot of good matter was crowded out of the report for lack of funds. Yet it seems there was plenty of money for this entirely unwarranted attack on a rising young man.

Where is the axe?

Let's cut off a tail close up to the ears.

R.

## IMPOSTORS IN TEXAS.

Omar F. Harshman writes that he met an impostor in Midland, Texas, and took him to the city marshal, but could not convince the authorities that he was a fake, so he was allowed to go. He gave the name of Ed Myers, and is about 22 years old, claimed he lost hearing five years ago and wanted money to go to school. Mr. Harshman has come across four other impostors in two years. He would like a police star from the N. A. D. so he could arrest the fellows. It is up to Chief Howard to provide the badge of authority.

## PROGRESSIVE (?) LEGISLATION

Governor Lister has vetoed the appropriations for the blind and deaf schools at Vancouver. So much for the defeat of M. E. Hay.

The conglomerated legislature will also kill time until it is too late to pass the impostor bill, which is now buried in a committee.

Great is progressiveism.

R.

## HOME FUND SWELLED.

A short time ago L. A. Divine forwarded \$72.75 to Treasurer Root for the Home Fund. This amount was raised by the pupils in the state school at Vancouver, largely through the efforts of Mr. Divine, we believe.

This is certainly a creditable sum for a school to raise. We understand they intend to do even better another year.

There is now \$268.79 in the bank to the credit of the Home Fund. Who will help to make it \$300 before the convention meets in July?

## BY GRAPEVINE TELEGRAPHY.

The president of the Washington State Association for the Deaf is sitting on a log in his Vancouver pasture lot, calmly taking his ease as to announcing the time and place of the next state convention. The brand of chewing gum he is using indicates it will come to Seattle July 3, 4, 5 and 6. The local committee is selected, but unless a rattlesnake crawls over that pasture log we may not know who for some time.

## JOIN THE N. A. D.

The Wisconsin deaf have appealed to the National Association for aid, and it will doubtless do all it can. But the N. A. D. is now already receiving more calls for aid than it can answer, with its limited resources.

The strange thing about it is that not one of the Wisconsin deaf is a member of the National Association, and some of the leaders have taken the attitude that the N. A. D. is of no value to the deaf as a class.

It strikes us that if the deaf everywhere would jump in and join the National Association, it would soon become a very powerful and effective curb to the unrestrained activity of those who know no law but their own desires, and would be able to answer all demands made upon it.

A word to the wise should be sufficient. Your turn to fight the Octopus may come any hour.—Kansas Star.

It seems perfectly natural for some women to be artificial.

The more the trusts want the less the common people get.

The average spinster insists that she is because she wants to.

Save your money and the chances are you will never regret it.

The moon affects the tide—an many young people who wish to be.

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## LOCALS.

Stray reports have it that there will be a June wedding in Seattle.

"Silent" Rowan, of Tacoma, drifted into town recently, looking as hale and hearty as ever.

Ed Langdon spent a few days in Tacoma last week, but was glad to get back to Seattle.

Mr. Flannigan, of Minnesota, again struck town last week. He had been south since his call here last summer.

J. H. O'Leary, after two weeks' stay in Seattle, left for Wenatchee, where we understand he has his old position.

We hear Bert Haire contemplates going to Bellingham to secure work. We shall be sorry to see Mr. and Mrs. Haire leave our midst.

The Bible class met as usual last Sunday, with Mr. Hanson in the leader's chair. The next meeting will be on the afternoon of Easter Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Wright recently attended a whist party given by the Ladies' Auxilliary of the I. T. U. Mr. Wright won second prize—a deck of cards.

The Wrights will remain in town this summer instead of going to the farm. Mr. Wright will take an occasional trip to Tieton to keep things moving.

Mr. and Mrs. Claire Reeves are now on their ranch near Vancouver, Wash., having spent the winter in Spokane. Mrs. Reeves is much improved in health.

Michael Brown, a ladies' tailor from San Francisco, arrived in town last week looking for work. He secured a job at Everett, but not liking the place, returned to Seattle.

Mrs. Hanson had a baby party one day the other week, when Mrs. Minnick, Mrs. Koberstein and Mrs. Haire, with their babies, ranging in age from five to ten months, spent the day with her.

Roy Harris is welcoming spring, for spring means he will go to Leavenworth and hunt and work. There is also something else down there that attracts Roy which we dare not speak of at present.

## ENCOURAGING (?)

When Christopher Smith was in town he visited a palm reader with the following result:

"Good hands, occupation good, make money, old age, strong mind, love no good, disappointment, be married once, love another woman bitter."

Mr. Smith is unable to decide whether or not to call this encouraging.

## CLUBBED.

Roy Harris and Albert Hole have joined the Western Federation of Motor Cyclists and were entertained by the club one night last week. They say it was swell.

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## THE ASSOCIATION MEETING.

The March business meeting of the Puget Sound Association was held Saturday evening, March 8, at the usual place. True Partridge presided, beginning his second term as president. The attendance was good and every one took a lively interest in the proceedings.

The minutes of the February meeting were read and accepted, with one or two minor corrections.

The executive committee had held a meeting March 5 and disposed of some business. The chair made a report covering the same.

Roy Harris, chairman of the masquerade committee, reported the receipts were \$40.06 and the expenditures \$24.10, leaving a balance of \$15.96 to be turned into the treasury. The attendance at the masquerade was the largest ever witnessed at a gathering of the kind by the Association. Mr. Christenson proposed a vote of thanks to the committee, and it carried.

P. L. Axling reported there was hardly any doubt that the executive committee of the State Association would select Seattle for the convention in July, information from the president being to that effect.

The membership committee had no new names on its list, hence no report, except that John Skoglund's application was still held in abeyance awaiting his desires in the matter.

Olof Hanson reported on the status of our investment in the bonds of The Trustee Company. The company wanted the approval of its bondholders for proposed improvements to property No. 6, such as steam heating plant and alterations. Mr. Hanson's motion that we approve was passed.

L. O. Christenson, the retiring treasurer, made his final report. He had turned over a balance of \$160.02 in bank to J. E. Gustin, the new treasurer, with detailed report of receipts and expenditures.

The following parties were proposed for membership, to be reported on at the next meeting by the membership committee: Frank Teuke, H. H. Kohn and Claude Ziegler.

The president announced he had selected the following to compose the committees: Membership: Mrs. O. Hanson, Mr. Hole and Miss Hammond; sick—Mrs. West and Mrs. Waugh. The convention and film committees were continued as formerly composed.

The matter of wreaths for Mrs. L. K. Clarke, Magnus Smith and Eskil Fernquist was disposed of.

turn. L. O. Christenson moved that at our next business meeting we have a memorial service for our departed friends. Motion seconded and passed.

The chair announced that the next social gathering, March 22, would be in charge of Mr. and Mrs. E. Swangren and be held at the hall.

On motion of Mr. Christenson the meeting adjourned.

P. L. AXLING, Secretary.

## ANOTHER SURPRISE PARTY.

The deaf of Seattle surprised Mrs. Koberstein on her birthday, Saturday evening, March 1. Mrs. Koberstein was entirely unaware of anything in the air, and was amazed when her friends trooped in towards 9 o'clock and congratulated her. Mr. Koberstein, who was in the secret, did his share towards the success of the occasion by providing a big freezer of ice cream. Whist was played, Mrs. Axling and Mr. Paterson winning the prizes. Before the party broke up, which was at midnight, her friends presented Mrs. Koberstein with a dozen silver teaspoons of Colonial design.

## THE N. A. D. BOOSTERS.

The next meeting of the N. A. D. Boosters of Seattle will be held Saturday evening, the 15th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. O. Hanson. A good many matters of interest to the local members of the National Association are likely to come up, and every one interested should be there. There is the Nebraska fight on the oral law to be discussed; and two or three matters of importance relating to the Cleveland convention. Proposed amendments to the constitution and by-laws of the Association are also likely to claim attention.

## ESKIL FERNQUIST.

Eskil Fernquist died at his home in Ballard, a suburb of Seattle, Monday night, March 3. He had been ill for some time with consumption, but his death came as a surprise to his many friends.

Mr. Fernquist was born in Wisconsin and attended the school in that state. After his parents moved to this state he spent two terms at Vancouver.

He was a quiet youth, well liked by his acquaintances. His age was about 26 years.

The funeral was held the fifth at a Ballard Swedish church and the remains interred at North Ballard cemetery.

Messrs. Christenson, Partridge, Harris, Laughlin, Morrissey and Root were the bearers.

## MONTANA BRIEFS

Flathead Valley is now enjoying regular summer days. Old Boreas has left us to do up the middle states and Atlantic Coast.

It is rumored that Mr. McKillip, the ranch keeper of the Boulder Institute has left for California.

Miss Julia Cole's parents have been to the Pacific Coast looking for a suitable place to live.

John Brinkman of Gossett, Mont., was in Boulder recently, on his way westward, looking for a homestead.

Elmo Kemp's mother, from Colorado, was with him the greater part of this winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward H. Garrett of Moline, Illinois, are coming to Flathead Valley this spring, to embark in the chicken, dairying and general farming business with ye scribe, at the same time be on the outlook for their own homestead.

## TACOMA

The party which Maurice Miller's mother gave him Saturday evening, March 8, in honor of his twenty-second birthday, added one more to the many delightful happenings we've been having this season. Progressive five hundred was played, prizes for highest scores going to Mr. Foster and Mrs. Seeley. After which a dainty collation (the writer has been warned to henceforth substitute that for "refreshments"—in print, at least) was served. In her toast, labeled "Many Happy Returns," Miss A. Hammond wished for we forget how many happy returns of the day, amid much applause. Mr. Miller was then presented with a handsome scarf pin as a reminder of the day. It was after 12 when the last guests departed, Mrs. Hammond giving them a lift in her auto, enabling them to catch the last car.

At the February meeting of the Tahoma Club, which was held March 1 at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Hammond, a short literary program was given. The remainder of the evening being spent in a social way. The president appointed Miss Hammond, Mr. Bertram and Mrs. Seeley as a committee to get up a social for this month. The chairman, Miss Hammond, announces she has secured a room in Tacoma Music Hall, on Tacoma Avenue, near Third, for the evening of March 29. It contains everything necessary (including a piano) to make the evening an enjoyable one for the deaf. We hope no one will be deterred from coming, because the admission price—25 cents. Come, everybody, and bring your friends. It isn't necessary that you be deaf, to be welcome. We don't know yet just what sort of affair we will have, but we will probably call it

a "musical," whatever it may be. To those with no soul for music we will give consolation in the way of a "collation."

We want all Seattle's deaf and their friends to be here, too, no matter whether they receive a special invitation or not. We'd be glad to welcome also those even as far away as Vancouver, B. C., and Vancouver, Wash.

Messrs. Langdon and Rhiley were in Tacoma recently. They, and also Mrs. Wade, who was in town to look after her property, and was the guest of Mrs. Seeley, attended the last meeting of the Tahoma Club.

Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz kept open house Sunday afternoon and evening, March 2. Those who enjoyed their hospitality were Mesdames Wade and Seeley, Mr. and Mrs. C. Hammond, Messrs. Miller, Langdon and Rhiley.

Mrs. Wade made a hasty trip to town from Seattle, Sunday, March 9. We notice she carried a Tacoma-bought umbrella. Funny the Rainier city doesn't carry as good umbrellas as Tacoma!

## WENATCHEE.

Mr. J. H. O'Leary has been here for a couple of weeks, and signs point to his settling here permanently.

Mr. Joe Bixler, who recently opened a studio in Odessa, expects to be in town today on business.

## OFF FOR FLORIDA.

John T. Harris, for many years a resident of Toppenish, Wash., has departed for Florida, where a number of his relatives live. His new address is Box 143, Chipley, Fla.

## ALWAYS GLAD TO.

A card received reads:

"Kindly change my address from Miss Emma Erickson, Redfield, S. D., to Mrs. D. M. Authier, Watauga, S. D."

We are always glad to correct addresses. Miss Erickson (or Mrs. Authier as we suppose we must call her) has been a subscriber to The Observer from the start. Of course a girl with such good sense knows how to pick out the right kind of a husband and we are sure they will enjoy a long and happy married life.

**Bible Class** for the deaf meets on the second and fourth Sunday of each month at 3:30 p. m. in Trinity Parish Church, corner Eighth Ave. & James St All welcome.

Olof Hanson, Lay-reader, in charge

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## SUMMING UP MISS JENNINGS' STATEMENTS.

Many deaf who have been educated by the oral method and later learned to understand and appreciate the sign language have expressed their appreciation of this sign language in no uncertain terms. One of these papers was written by Miss Alice C. Jennings of Boston. The Minnesota Companion, in commenting on her paper, brought out the leading points, which are given below.

The value of Miss Jennings' statements lies in the fact that, until a few years ago her life was passed amid the most approved oral environments. She knew nothing of the Sign Language and the manual alphabet, or, at least, made no use of them at all. Add to this the fact that she is a lady of superior intellectual endowment, and it must be admitted that she is particularly qualified to render an opinion as to the value of the Sign Language now that she learned it and makes use of it, and can testify as to its effects upon herself, and, by observation, upon other deaf persons.

Is it advisable for the orally-taught to know signs after leaving school? Miss Jennings says:

"Given an oral graduate of normal intelligence, is it benefit to him or her, in a religious, intellectual and social sense, to understand signs? I answer, unhesitatingly, yes.

Miss Jennings disposes of the claim that the orally-taught deaf can understand public speaking, by saying:

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## PUGET SOUND ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

Every deaf person in the Puget Sound country is or should be a member of this association.

Why?

Because in union there is strength—we can help one another.

Also come and meet your fellow deaf for a social time, intellectual advancement and moral uplift.

Business meeting, second Saturday night of each month. Social, fourth Saturday night of each month.

Meeting at Carpenter Hall, Fourth Avenue just north of Pine Street.

## Officers:

President—True Partridge.

Vice-President—Miss Cleon Morris.

Secretary, Philip L. Axling.

Treasurer, John E. Gustin.

Serg.-at-Arms, A. H. Koberstein.

"How, many, even of the best lip-readers, ever really understand an oral sermon? Hardly one. All my life I have attended such services, and I know many deaf people who have done the same. A few words we might understand—many more we might pretend to understand—but the whole sermon—never! It is a physical impossibility."

Miss Jennings does not regard the Sign Language as an imperfect and inexpressive vehicle of thought, as its foes so often declare that it is:

"It was like a new world to me. It seemed wonderful that such deep thought could be expressed by a few gestures and the spelling of a few words."

Some have declared that the Sign Language stunts mental growth. Miss Jennings believes that the reverse is true:

"The study of signs has, I think, increased my own mental power. I have written more vividly, more pictorially, through having these 'pictured words' constantly before my mind."

The champions of oralism assert that their method restores the deaf to society. Miss Jennings has not found it to be so. She gave an idea of the situation and feelings of the orally-taught in a social gathering of hearing people:

"Common-sense declares that nothing but the restoration of hearing can give full social status to the deaf. In a large assembly of hearing people, deafness is a very great obstacle to social enjoyment. To the more shy and timid, it is a painful obstacle and they deserve no blame if they shrink from it."

Now see what she says about the deaf in the society of their own kind:

"But let them go into a party where all are like themselves, and instantly the load is lifted, they forget all about it! Though they cannot understand everything, it is a joy to drop all sense of singularity and be themselves for once."

Miss Jennings practically asserts that the oral method isolates the deaf, when she says:

"Oralists occupy a peculiarly trying position. They are 'neither pigs or puppies'—neither hearing people nor sign-people."

She makes mention of the physical strain of trying to follow speech closely for any length of time:

"Another great advantage of knowing signs is the relief thus given to a physical strain. The best lip-reader that ever lived cannot understand everything. When, in a sermon or conversation, signs and the manual alphabet are freely used, the meaning is not only rendered more clear, but the labor of getting hold of it is vastly lessened."

Referring to the fact that many orally-taught deaf have joined societies of the deaf in which the Sign Language is the medium of communication, and are assiduously learning that language, Miss Jennings says:

"We have yet to hear the least word of regret from any one who has earnestly taken up this study. It seems rather to give a new zest to life."

She declares that the orally taught deaf need both signs and speech to make their lives full and complete:

"To sum up the whole matter: Oral speech is valuable, but signs are also valuable, and we oralists need both. To know but one is to be like the half of a pair of scissors. Neither half can cut alone. Put the two together and they cut through everything—through all difficulties of communication."

An orally-taught deaf friend of Miss Jennings wrote to her as follows:

"I am glad that we have learned the Sign Language. My experience and observation have convinced me that those who can use it are much

happier, more contented with their lot, more popular among the deaf, and therefore more influential, than the pure oralists."

Miss Jennings' concluding words are:

"Of course the Sign Language, like all other good things, may be abused. But in itself it is a precious and beautiful gift, and I thank God for it."

Take notice, all you who condemn the Sign Language and would annihilate it if you could, this lady was a product of oral methods, she was taught to despise the Sign Language, and for years she carried on association with her fellow-beings only by means of speech and lip-reading. Chance, or shall we not say rather, Providence, led her to learn the Sign Language, and—she thanks God for it. And so do all the deaf throughout the world who know and use that language and who have the right and the courage to express their opinions.—Minnesota Companion, State School for the Deaf, Faribault, Minn. Oct. 10, 1906.



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